

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOI/PA  
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET  
FOI/PA# 1465244-000

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SAC, Las Vegas

10-6-61

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EX-105 REC-65

Director, FBI (62-106949) 37

**DONALD LEONARD ARMSTRONG**  
**MISCELLANEOUS - INFORMATION CONCERNING**  
**(ESPIONAGE)**

Rerep Special Agent Ford E. Holmes dated 9-28-61  
 at Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Las Vegas Office should submit amended pages to the  
 report of Special Agent Holmes as described below:

Page two, paragraph three, of Special Agent Holmes' report makes reference to Brigadier General Herbert C. Holdridge, U.S. Army (retired). The following thumbnail sketch concerning General Holdridge should be inserted immediately following reference to him.

"Concerning General Holdridge, it should be noted that he was retired from the United States Army in 1944 as a Brigadier General after a finding he was permanently incapacitated for military service because of 'psychoneurosis, reactive depression (situational) mild.' Since his retirement, Holdridge has been extremely active in producing literature against the Catholic Church, well-known industrialists, and the policies of various Government agencies."

Page five, paragraph four, of Special Agent Holmes' report indicates Armstrong was admonished by the Las Vegas Office. This paragraph is administrative in nature and should be deleted from Special Agent Holmes' report.

Page five, paragraph seven, of Special Agent Holmes' report makes reference to one Joe Conforte. A brief statement should be inserted following this paragraph which will identify Conforte.

The above changes should be made immediately, and amended pages to Special Agent Holmes' report should be promptly furnished to the Bureau and other interested offices.

1 - Honolulu  
 1 - Salt Lake City (52-3818)

REL:ehg

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

64

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Letter to SAC, Las Vegas  
Re: DONALD LEONARD ARMSTRONG  
62-106949

NOTE:

Armstrong is the individual who has circulated mimeographed letters attacking the Director and the FBI. Instant report of Special Agent Holmes summarizes investigation conducted by Las Vegas Office concerning Armstrong. The requested amended pages are necessary to clarify Special Agent Holmes' report and to delete administrative data from the details of such report. The sketch of Holdridge is Bureau approved sketch to identify Holdridge.

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

EX-105  
PAGE 66  
File

Reporting Office <b>LAS VEGAS</b>	Office of Origin <b>LAS VEGAS</b>	Date <b>9/28/61</b>	Investigative Period <b>11/29/60 - 9/19/61</b>
TITLE OF CASE  <b>DONALD LEONARD ARMSTRONG, Aka</b> <del>ET AL</del>		Report made by <b>FORD E. HOLMES</b>	Typed By: <b>jmc</b>
		CHARACTER OF CASE  <b>MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION CONCERNING;</b> <del>ET AL</del>	

Synopsis:

## REFERENCES:

Bureau airtel to Las Vegas dated 3/17/61.  
Las Vegas airtel to Bureau dated 4/26/61.  
Las Vegas airtel to Bureau dated 6/29/61.  
San Francisco teletype to Bureau and Las Vegas dated 7/10/61.  
Las Vegas airtel to Bureau dated 7/18/61.  
Las Vegas airtel to Bureau dated 8/10/61.  
Las Vegas airtel to Salt Lake City dated 9/7/61.  
Salt Lake City teletype to Bureau dated 9/14/61.  
Salt Lake City teletype to Las Vegas dated 9/16/61.  
Bureau airtel to Salt Lake City and Las Vegas dated 9/15/61.

Approved <i>J. H. [Signature]</i>	Special Agent In Charge	Do not write in space below	
Copies made: 2-Bureau (62-106949) 1-Honolulu (Info) 2-Salt Lake City (52-3818) 2-Las Vegas [Redacted]		62-106949 20 OCT 2 1961 FBI RECEIVED FBI RECEIVED FBI RECEIVED	REC-66 EX-105 b3 b7E UNRECORDED

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ESP. SEC.  
Property of FBI - This report is loaned to you by the FBI and neither it nor its contents are to be distributed outside the agency to which loaned.

[redacted]

Following this, [redacted] said she made some inquiries about ARMSTRONG and learned he has spent some time in Pasadena, California, in close association with General HOLDRIDGE whom she said is a retired army officer who has been in the news a lot and whom she considers to be a full fledged Communist. According to her information, ARMSTRONG has been working with HOLDRIDGE in a campaign to incite the American Indians, and ARMSTRONG has been commuting between Reno, Arizona, and Los Angeles in this endeavor. HOLDRIDGE is, according to [redacted] credited with a recent statement that former president EISENHOWER should be "strung up" for his treatment of the American Indians.

[redacted] advised that ARMSTRONG drives a white Volvo, has no visible means of support, and has a weak personality.

Another call [redacted] made resulted in the information that ARMSTRONG had attended a group in Reno known as the "Understanding Group." [redacted] said she had attended a few meetings of this group, and it consists of a bunch of "crackpots." ARMSTRONG is alleged to be a hypnotist, has been associated with "BARON" VON BRENNER, Reno, in this activity; has had to do with fighting Cocks, and has reportedly gone through two fortunes. At one time he opened an office in the Woolworth building in Reno, advertised for a secretary, and interviewed 200 applicants. He at one time had a helicopter service at Lake Tahoe, and went "broke" in that venture.

[redacted] said that from observing him on television, plus the inquiries she had made, she considers him to be a psychopathic case. She said that for example, when the above mentioned incident with DARRAH occurred, and DARRAH refused to have further to do with ARMSTRONG, ARMSTRONG went into a "seance," said he could see bloodshed, and could see District Attorney WILLIAM RAGGIO, Reno, being killed.

With reference to MACDONALD, [redacted] said that he is a money grabber, an opportunist, and may be a cleverly disguised Communist, although of the latter allegation, she was unable to furnish specific information. She advised

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of: **FORD E. HOLMES**  
Date: **9/28/61**Office: **Las Vegas, Nevada**Field Office File No. Bureau File No.: **62-106949**b3  
b7ETitle: **DONALD LEONARD ARMSTRONG,  
ET AL**Character: **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION CONCERNING;  
THEFT OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY**

Synopsis: **ARMSTRONG** has written letters containing derogatory remarks concerning the Director, FBI and several Nevada state officials. On interview he declined to substantiate his allegations. AUSAS Sacramento, California and Reno, Nevada, advised mailing of letters do not constitute violation of federal law. **ARMSTRONG** has been described as a "crackpot" and about ready to "flip his lid". He claims to be the right hand man of retired Brigadier General **HERBERT HOLDRIDGE** and to subscribe to his ideas. He informed associate he was not a Communist. Local District Attorney Reno, described **ARMSTRONG** as "paranoid" and stated from experience it would be difficult to commit this type of person. **ARMSTRONG** and three Indian subjects arrested Goshute Indian Reservation in Utah and charged with obstructing a federal employee from conducting his official duties and theft of government property. All released on own recognizance. Efforts to locate **ARMSTRONG**, Reno, negative. **ARMSTRONG** has resided Reno area for several years. Formerly operated lodge at Lake Tahoe and had helicopter service, both of which failed. Has also claimed to be a hypnotist. He has numerous unpaid bills. Was divorced by wife 3/11/60 and she testified he humiliated her on occasions in public by his false accusations and when drinking had an ungovernable temper. \$7,696.63 default judgment obtained against helicopter service for rent due for lease of helicopter.

- P -

[REDACTED]

He claimed to have "worked with" the FBI for 20 years, but refused to enlarge on that statement except to say he was not an employee and was not an informant.

He said he is not going to stop his attacks and has a well organized program in this respect.

He said he has developed a lot of information indicating homosexuality in Nevada State Government circles, and said this would be of interest to the FBI. He was informed this was not within FBI jurisdiction.

At this point ARMSTRONG asked if he was to take this statement that he was being threatened. He was informed that the word being used was "admonished" and he could interpret it any way he desired.

On March 21, 1961, ELMER BRISCOE, Chief of Police, Reno, Nevada, advised SA ALLEN R. BOOTH that he had been informed by Rev. CLYDE E. MATHEWS, Colony Baptist Church, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, that DON ARMSTRONG had been around stirring up the Indians and trying to get them to follow him. MATHEWS said that he had also been informed by NICK JACKSON, owner of Newman's Silver Shop, Reno, that ARMSTRONG claims to be associated with a General HOLDRIDGE and to be the head of the Muslims in the United States and to have control over a million Negroes.

In casual conversation on March 28, 1961, ERIC RICHARDS, Assistant District Attorney, Washoe County, Reno, advised SA CARROL T. NEVIN that ARMSTRONG is a "crack pot"; that at one time he had an auction sales company on South Virginia Street in Reno. At the same time WILLIAM RAGGIO, District Attorney, commented that at one time ARMSTRONG lived with one DONALD MC COUN, also known as DON MILLER, an associate of JOE CONFORTE.

With reference to JOSEPH CONFORTE, it is noted he is well known as the operator of a house of prostitution located near Wadsworth, Nevada. He was convicted on a local extortion charge in Washoe County District Court at Reno, Nevada, on July 11, 1960. This case is presently on appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

On April 11, 1961, Rev. CLYDE H. MATHEWS, JR., 1971 East Second Street, who is the missionary minister for the Indian Colony, Reno, advised SA LORING J. MC GEE that that

depression (situational) mild". Since his retirement, HOLDRIDGE has been extremely active in producing literature against the Catholic Church, well-known industrialists and the policies of various government agencies.

ZELDA SHULLEY advised that ARMSTRONG said that he is not a Communist because true Communism is not what the Russians have. He said that true Communism is a way of everyone living



[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

weekend there was to be a meeting of the Indian Tribes called by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, with a "task force" from that Bureau hearing of the Indian problems in a series of meetings at the State Building in Reno and at the University of Nevada. He said ARMSTRONG had called the university and wanted to speak at the meetings and indicated HOLDRIDGE might be there.

Rev. MATHEWS made available a handout ARMSTRONG was distributing entitled ~~"Universal Indian Truth League"~~ signed D. ARMSTRONG, MSD, Executive Director. The pamphlet is very critical of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the government in the treatment of the Indian.

On the second page of the pamphlet ARMSTRONG states the FBI has a complete file on every individual and that any sheriff or police chief can obtain the file and that in some areas the file was turned over to unscrupulous people who use the information against a person holding public office and that the person holding public office will go along with the unscrupulous person rather than have some unsavory act, innocently committed, revealed and this now brings hardship to the very people who intrusted them to that position.

On June 28, 1961 SA FORD E. HOLMES received an envelope postmarked at Lodi, California containing a two page mimeographed document entitled "The Voice of the Constitution", Post Office Box 1891, Reno, Nevada". The bottom of the second page indicates the material was prepared by D. L. ARMSTRONG, Executive Director, Post Office Box 1891, and that distribution was made to all state governors, newspapers, FBI, Internal Revenue Department, and general public distribution.

It is noted that in the communication reference was made to Governor GRANT SAWYER, Nevada Chief Justice FRANK MC NAMEE, State Senator CHARLES D. GALLAGHER, Colonel JAMES W. DALZELL, Commanding Officer of Nevada's Air National Guard, and Washoe County Juvenile Officer DWIGHT NELSON, as homosexuals.

The communication also states "Just recently a man's life was threatened by FBI Agents. By reason that the man had written Federal Attorney General BOB KENNEDY concerning homosexuals in the government and that the head of the FBI,

[REDACTED]

He said that ARMSTRONG is not the same man in his thinking now that he was eight or nine years ago. He is very bitter about his failures and has become quite radical in his thinking. He claims to be a General HOLDRIDGE trained man and to believe in the same principals. Because of his bitterness, which he blames on the Reno area, he is using the present means of attack to get back at the people and the area which he believes responsible for his failures. He said ARMSTRONG has always been a "dreamer" and "fought windmills all of his life". He said he knew of no trouble in which ARMSTRONG had become involved with the exception of his last actions on the Indian Reservation. For a time he even took up and became interested in hypnosis. He has read a good many books and articles on homosexuals. He claims that all the statements he has ever made he can prove but has never shown proof of any of them.

He further advised that ARMSTRONG believes the Indians are being cheated by the white people. He conceived the idea of opening a storehouse at Virginia, Nevada and having all of the Indians send their goods there to be sold at a reasonable profit. He also approached CAMPBELL with the idea of having all of the gambling casinos donate one day of their take on the slot machines to be used to help the Indians. He advised ARMSTRONG has a pretty sharp mind but has become very radical in his thinking since tying in with HOLDRIDGE. He has expressed the opinion that he has nothing to lose and to let anyone sue him and the whole matter will come out in court.

By communication dated September 12, 1961 the Bureau advised that records of the Identification Division reflect that ARMSTRONG has FBI number 934 766 D. There is no arrest record but he was fingerprinted on three occasions as follows:

<u>Contributor of Fingerprints</u>	<u>Name and Number</u>	<u>Date</u>
Army	DONALD LEONARD ARMSTRONG # 17196782	July 17, 1942 Fort Snelling, Minnesota
Civil Service Commission	DONALD LEONARD ARMSTRONG # 12.51.54809	December 12, 1950

DETAILS:

AT RENO, NEVADA

On November 29, 1960 Assistant United States Attorney CHESTER C. SWOBE advised he was in receipt of a letter from BURTON A. LADD, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Nevada Indian Agency, Stewart, Nevada, in which LADD referred to a DON ARMSTRONG as being connected with an organization called "The Foundation of Indian Restoration and Enlightenment". The officers of the organization are JOHN DRESSLER, GORDON FRAZIER, CONNIE HUNTER, FRANK JOHN, BRADY JOHNSON, and MARY MONTGOMERY. SWOBE referred the matter for possible investigation of the organization.

On January 11, 1961 BURTON A. LADD, advised that ARMSTRONG was in to see him on one occasion and said the attention of his group was to help the Indian children. He said he was chairman of four different groups to help the Indians but refused to tell what the groups were. LADD said he has no information that the organization is Communist controlled or that ARMSTRONG is a Communist. He said it was his opinion ARMSTRONG might be "just a nut".

On January 12, 1961 ROBERT and ZELDA SHULLEY, 1301 University Terrace, were interviewed at their request and they advised they desired to furnish some information concerning one DON ARMSTRONG. ARMSTRONG, whom they met several years ago, had a business known as Tahoe Helicopters Service. At that time he was studying metaphysics, has also reportedly been a hypnotist and used to be able to quote the Bible beautifully. Several days prior to the interview he contacted them and his attitude was entirely different. He wants to form an organization in Nevada and demand that the Federal Government release all the land to the state so that Nevada could become a sovereign state. He showed them literature written by Brigadier General United States Army retired HERBERT C. HOLDRIDGE titled "Reveille" and he says this literature embraces his ideas. He claims to be HOLDRIDGE'S right hand man in Nevada. He was accompanied by a man known as RAY MEIER.

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For the Bureau's information, there is set out below information that has come to the attention of this office recently concerning ARMSTRONG and MAC DONALD.

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